A descriptive catalogue of the etched work of Wenceslaus Hollar 1607–1677

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CONTENTS

THE LIFE OF HOLLAR

EARLY YEARS, 1607–36

Of all etchers, Hollar is certainly the most varied in subject, one of the most accomplished in technique, and with a style that is full of a charm, a humour, and a good nature that are evidently the character of the man himself.

Fortunately for us today, his remarkable gifts were devoted to the recording of scenes and incidents in the world around him, and so we have in Hollar the most faithful portrayer of his time, that seventeenth century of turbulence in Europe and of civil war in England.

Unfortunately, of his personal life we know little. It seems to have been so wholly devoted to his art as to have left few traces outside, and his biographers have filled up the blanks with surmises or inventions. Here, the little that is known is given with no attempt at imaginative reconstruction. The few original sources of information are listed in the Bibliography.

He was born at Prague on 23 July 1607. The biographical notices differ as to the day of Hollar's birth, hesitating between 13 and 23 July, the ten days' difference being that between the old Julian and the new Gregorian calendar. But the new reckoning went into effect in Roman Catholic countries in 1582; and as Bohemia was such a country, Hollar would have been born according to the modern system, and if the date were recorded it would be that of the modern calendar. It seems however not to be on record, for the standard Czech work on Hollar, that by Eugen Dostál (Prague, 1924), is not categorical, but inclines to the 23rd.[1] Ashmole in Bodleian MS. 243, fol. 180v., has 'Mr Winceslaus Hollar the famous etcher borne at Prague 23 July stilo vet: 1607'; but in some astrological references to Hollar in MS. 3 he corrects this to 'stilo novo'.

He was born into a good and respectable bourgeois family that had originally been established at Horaždoviče in southern Bohemia, where a Martin Hollar, a well-to-do brewer and the town clerk, is recorded in 1537. His father was Jan Hollar, Registrar of the Law Court at Prague, who, with his brother Jakob, was knighted by the Emperor Rudolph II and authorised to use the title 'of Prachna', this being the name of the castle near Horaždoviče, a castle which appears on the arms which he assumed. His mother was of a family probably superior in rank and entitled to bear arms. She was Margaret, daughter of David Löw of Lövengrün and Bareyt. She died when Wenceslaus was six years old. His father remarried and produced a stepbrother, Jan, for Wenceslaus and Nicolas, his sons by the first marriage.

Hollar was born at a moment when Prague was temporarily the capital of the Empire under Rudolph II, who gathered in the castle there his famous art collection. But Rudolph abdicated in 1612 in favour of his brother Matthias who transferred the Court back to Vienna. It was the death of Matthias in 1619 that prompted the rebellion of the Bohemian Estates and their election of Frederick the Elector Palatine as king of Bohemia. If the uprising against the Hapsburgs was courageous, the choice of Frederick, James I of England's son-in-law, was unfortunate; and the brief Bohemian adventure ended disastrously at the battle of the White Mountain near Prague on 8 November 1621, which lost Frederick both Bohemia and the Palatinate. This defeat led to much strife and diplomatic activity in the years to come, and its significance is the theme of the design which Hollar etched for Rushworth's *Historical collections* in 1659 (P543). One of its diplomatic consequences was the mission of the earl of Arundel to the Emperor in 1636, and it was when on this mission that he came to Cologne and took into his employment two young etchers, one of whom was Wenceslaus Hollar.

The Emperor's grant of arms to the father, who was given the right to add 'de Prachna' to his name, obviously indicates his satisfactory financial and social status; and issued by the Catholic Emperor, the grant is certainly proof of conformity with the Catholic faith.[1] There is some uncertainty about Hollar's religion; but there can be no doubt that he came of a Catholic family; and Aubrey's statement that his father was a Protestant must be disregarded; and as for Evelyn's story that Hollar was converted to Catholicism by the Jesuits of Antwerp, this will be discussed later.[2]

Springell has suggested[3] that his father may have been an Ultraquist, a kind of 'old Hussite' or Bohemian Catholic. The point is unimportant, since religion

1 Dostál quotes L. J. Živný, 'Václav Hollar. Nové příspěvky k jeho životopisu', in *Nová Doba*, XVIII, 1911; but Živný himself is uncertain, although he inclines to the 23rd as the date.

1 It is significant that when the Emperor Ferdinand II ordered the confiscation of the property of Protestants, the Hollar family property was not seized.

2 See p. xxxvi below.

3 F. C. Springell, *Connoisseur and diplomat*, Maggs Bros, 1963. Henceforward referred to as Springell.

played little or no part in Hollar's life: he expressed no sectarian sentiment in his work, and turned his hand indifferently to High Church biblical illustrations or to so Presbyterian a manifesto as the Solemn League and Covenant, as the demands of his employers, the publishers, required. There is one incident that suggests that he remained a Catholic. He was arrested 'coming from a Chappel' in 1656. If the arrest was due to the chapel attendance, it must have been because the chapel was one of those attached to a foreign embassy and therefore Catholic. The Commonwealth discouraged those who were not embassy officials from attending them, Catholicism being at this time too often a cloak for treason.

It seems clear that Wenceslaus left his home and Prague about the age of twenty.[1] It may not be necessary to find any other reason than that this is something young men are inclined to do. Francis Place in his letter to Vertue written in 1716[2] says that Hollar 'was bred a clarck in some of the offices of that country [Bohemia] which he left when the unfortunate troubles broke out there, seconded by Gustavus Adolphus'. The biographical notice under his portrait by Meyssens which was published in 1649 in Antwerp when Hollar himself was there says that he was by nature inclined to 'l'art de meniature principalement pour esclaircir' but was discouraged by his father. The meaning of 'esclaircir' is doubtful, although Vertue says that it means 'graving with Aqua fortis'; but the implication is that his artistic leanings did not appeal to his father, who, says Vertue, intended him for the Law. Aubrey says that Hollar told him

> 'that when a schoole-boy he tooke a delight in draweing of mapps; which draughts he kept, and they were pretty . . . So that what he did for his delight and recreation only when a boy, proved to be his livelyhood when a man'.

That his artistic inclinations had already expressed themselves early is shown by a few etchings which precede his apprenticeship, or rather informal training, for he seems not to have been a formally bound apprentice. P132 is a small etching of Mary and the infant Jesus, copied from Dürer, dated 1625 and signed with a monogram; but the fact that an almost identical monogram is found on a similar crude print, also copied from Dürer, and signed in addition 'WHollar fec/1626' proves that it is Hollar's device. It appears to consist of the letters 'WHEP', and it is suggested that this stands for 'Wenceslaus Hollar Eques Pragensis'.[3] The monogram is found on five other prints: two prints of Jesus which Parthey calls 'Ecce Homo', P104 and P104A, both dated 1625; a 'Fortune' after Aldegrever dated 1626, P457; a bust portrait of Dürer from a woodcut by Erhard Schön dated 1625, P1391; and a bust of a man after Heemskerk, P1542. All these are imitative juvenile work and technically primitive. After this, Hollar ceases to use the monogram.

There are also five prints that were unknown to Parthey which may be by Hollar and belong to this early period. They are listed here as P718A–E. All are unsigned, but one is dated 1626, and all resemble Hollar's style, in so far as a style can be recognised in this preliminary period. Two small circular landscapes, P1227 and P1227A, dated 1627, may be his work too; but they are of such poor workmanship that the question may be left undecided. And finally, there is a pencil sketch of Prague, dated 1626, in the John Rylands Library sketch-book.

Who taught him to etch we do not know. There was a well-known etcher in Prague at this time, Aegidius Sadeler of Antwerp, whose illustrations of animal fables certainly inspired some of Clein's designs for Hollar's *Aesop*; and as the art of etching needs instruction, it is possible that Hollar received it from Sadeler. Nor do we know whether he went directly and of purpose to the studio of Matthæus Merian at Frankfort in 1627 or came there after some preliminary peregrinations. In his letter to Vertue of 1716, Francis Place, speaking of Hollar, says that 'he carried arms in the Militia in Germany but was soon tir'd out.' But he goes on to say 'he studied with one Merian . . . who has likewise etch[ed] the most prints of views of places in Germany of any man that ever was. but Mr Hollar exceeded his Master.'

Matthæus Merian the elder, born at Bâle in 1593 and died in 1650, was a famous engraver and also – and for the young Hollar seeking work this must have been important – the head of a Europe-wide art publishing business, for he had married the daughter of Theodore de Bry, himself an engraver and publisher, and on de Bry's death in 1623 had succeeded to the business. In collaboration with his son Matthæus he produced the illustrations for such monumental publications as the *Theatrum Europæum*, a survey of contemporary European history, and the 'prospects' or bird's-eye views for the equally imposing *Topographia* series of surveys of the countries of Europe for which the text was supplied by Martin Zeiller.

Apart from Place's statement, there is no certain proof of Hollar's apprenticeship with Merian, but it is commonly accepted, as by Wüthrich in his recent work on the elder Merian; and it is almost certainly true, for there is one piece of evidence not so far noticed, fragile indeed, but for a student of Hollar's style con-

1 He was still there in 1627 according to a dated sketch of the 'Rathauss in Prag' in the JRL. sketch-book.

2 Vertue Note books, *Walpole Society Publications*, XVIII, 1930, pp. 34–5.

3 There is some uncertainty about the significance of this monogram, as Borovský's note reveals, although none about its being Hollar's. Some read 'Exsul' for the 'E' and some 'Excudit'. And one example does seem to include an 'L'.

vincing. In some of the bird's-eye views that Merian's studio turned out for such series as the Janssonius topographical surveys, there occurs occasionally some lettering distinct from the rest that can be confidently stated to be by Hollar. For his lettering has a highly individual character that can be immediately recognised by anyone familiar with his work; and it is to be seen, for example, on the bird's-eye view of Avignon in J. L. Gottfried's *Neuwe archontologia cosmica* of 1628 and in the prints of the battles at Leipzig and at Nordlingen in vols II and III of the *Theatrum Europæum*.

There is only one signed etching for 1627, a Holy Family, after Heintz. It is a mediocre work, and it is to be presumed that he was busy learning his art in the Merian workshop.

For 1628 there is only one signed and dated etching, and it is of Canstatt near Stuttgart. But we have four pencil drawings, all dated and also done at Stuttgart between 1 January and 23 March. Clearly he was in this neighbourhood at this time. He may even have arrived by the 18th of November of the previous year, since, as Springell notes,[1] there is in the Stuttgarter Landesbibliothek a *Liber amicorum* of Paul Jenisch on a page of which (under this date) is a sketch by Hollar of a Venus and Cupid. If then he had been learning his trade with Merian at Frankfort, his apprenticeship had been unusually brief.

The Stuttgart–Strasbourg period continues through 1628 and into 1629. There is a dated sketch of Strasbourg (Sprinzells 114) which was to be the basis of etching P723 two years later, and in the JRL. sketch-book is another dated Strasbourg view of this time. Two other etchings of the city, P753 and P755, are inscribed as having been drawn in 1629. Hollar may have received a commission from, or simply placed his work with, the Strasbourg print-seller Jacob van der Heiden, since it was he who sold Hollar's 'Elephant', P2119; and Heiden's name appears on other etchings which are undated, but, from their subject, can be assumed to belong to this time: the 'Seasons' after van de Velde, P618–621; the 'Strasbourg Seasons', P622–625; and the tower and clock of Strasbourg cathedral, P893. All these, and especially the 'Seasons', show Hollar already with a perfected technique and a recognisable style.

He must have been still in Strasbourg, or have returned there, in 1630, since a view of the city dated 1630 is in the *Amoenissimi . . . prospectus* (P723); the etching of the cathedral tower, P892, is 'ad vivum delineata . . . 1630'; and a pencil sketch of the country near Strasbourg is in the British Museum. But he must have moved to Cologne sometime in this year, since a pencil sketch of Cologne, signed 'WH 1630' is now at Dresden (Sprinzels 122).

At Cologne he continued to live, with two brief intervals of travel, until 1636, when he left the continent for England. But of his life there we know nothing,[1] and the number of prints that can be assigned to this period is not large. There is the charming 'Aachen relics', P230, which appeared in a Cologne 'Chronicle' of 1632; the 'Augsburg Confession', P231, later taken over by van der Heiden; and the 'Allegory of the grape', P491, which is clearly intended for a German public. But the various scenes of battles fought at this time were probably done later when he was an exile in Antwerp. There are also the 'Ten small views', P782–791, and the *Reisbüchlein*, both published by Abraham Hogenberg, a Cologne publisher, who also published Hollar's *Amoenissimæ . . . effigies* in 1635. But it is a small harvest for what Springell calls 'the most prolific phase of his artistic life', and it is difficult to see how these half-hundred or so etchings would have supported an artist for six years, unless he was also employed in the workshop of a recognised engraver or by a print-seller. Vertue speaks of him travelling 'to several great cities in Germany, through Frankfort to Colen and Antwerp and returned again to Colen, where he resided some time with difficulty enough to subsist'. This last phrase must certainly be true.

There are, however, many rough pencil sketches extant from this time, and many later etchings can be seen to be based upon drawings that must have been done now. So there is, submerged as it were beneath the visible etched work, a greater volume of pencil work that will only much later come to the surface as a print. Sprinzels lists ten drawings from this time, and thirty-two more are in the John Rylands Library sketch-book; and on sketches from the Cologne period such etched series as the *Amoenissimi . . . prospectus* of 1643 must be based, as well as the series of German views (P727–781). And it must have been now that Hollar made many of those detailed costume studies which he later turned into the etchings of the *Theatrum mulierum*, 1643, and the *Aula Veneris*, 1644.

Of original drawings by Hollar, there are two kinds: the little, rough pencil sketches obviously made quickly on the spot, such as are found in the John Rylands Library sketch-book; and the highly finished drawings based upon these, which were in some cases the careful preparation for the etched plate. These latter are usually washed over in light blue or brown tints, and are of great beauty. One of the finest is the view of Linz, now in the Louvre, for which, however, no etching is known; and there is a view of Cologne-Deutz, no. 14 at Prague. A similar study of Cologne is at Dresden and a view of Mainz is at Prague (no. 40).

1 Springell, p. 156.

1 That it was not without some natural alleviations we may perhaps assume from a note he adds to a drawing of a naked woman: 'Dieses mach ich zu gutter und immerwehrender Gedachtnuss in Collen, den 31 July A° 1633 Wentzeslaus Hollar von Prag.'

How closely Hollar-the-etcher followed Hollar-the-draughtsman can be seen by comparing the print of Mülheim, P725, with the coloured drawing, no. 44 at Prague, reproduced in Kratochvíl's book. Thirty-one of these delightful tinted drawings have been published in colour by Atia of Prague in 1965 with a preface by Miloš V. Kratochvíl. All were done before Hollar left for England at the end of 1636, most of them during the journey with Arundel, and they represent his art at its freshest. This careful work in pencil and water-colour is typical of Hollar's art. It is plain, straightforward, unaffected, natural, and owes almost nothing either to the Dutch or German schools. One has the feeling that never has natural scenery been so faithfully and directly transferred to paper. A tranquil, unaggressive realism.

During this Cologne period Hollar took two, or possibly three, journeys, one south to Mainz, and one north to the United Provinces. From 1632 we have a signed and dated pencil drawing of Mainz (Sprinzels 145), and the fine study of the same city, no. 40 at Prague, a pencil drawing with a brown wash, showing the fort newly built by Gustavus Adolphus. His Dutch visit was in 1634, to judge from the ten drawings that are extant of Amsterdam and the other Dutch cities, and of a Dutch ship. And it was now that he copied the Rembrandt etching of the naked woman which he turned into an etching himself the following year (P603). It will be noticed that his travels were either up or down the Rhine. This was the obvious line of communication and probably the cheapest, and it explains why so many of Hollar's landscapes are views along this river. One drawing at the John Rylands Library is interesting: a view of Prague dated quite clearly 1635. It has not previously been thought that Hollar revisited his native place before the visit with Arundel in 1636. Some of the dates in the John Rylands Library book are added later, when an error of memory was possible; but it is not likely that Hollar would have made a mistake as to a visit to Prague, and it must be taken that he went back in this year. The fruit of these journeys appeared in 1635 when Hogenberg published a set of twenty-three views of the Rhineland and the Netherlands under the title *Amoenissimæ aliquot locorum in diversis provinciis jacentium effigies*. The next year he published *Reisbüchlein*, literally 'a little travel book', but in fact containing twenty-four studies ('from Bylert and Henzelman' says Vertue) of heads of men and women, but rather costume studies than portraits.

In the nine years since he had left home, Hollar had mastered the technique of etching and had developed an individual style; but, apart from demonstrating an aptitude for the small landscape and for miniature portrait studies, he had not produced any notable work. He was now nearly twenty-nine and his prospects were not bright. The turning point in his life came by chance and unexpectedly with the arrival of Lord Arundel at Cologne in April 1636.

Arundel had been sent by Charles I on a completely hopeless mission to the Emperor to persuade him to restore Charles' nephew, the son of his sister Elizabeth, to the Palatinate, which the folly of his father had lost; or to provide some compensation for the alienation of half of it to the duchy of Bavaria. Whether Charles, who disliked Arundel, was sincere in this foredoomed diplomacy, it is not possible to tell: the sincerity of Charles was the one thing in which neither his friends nor his foes had any trust. If Arundel accepted the mission (which it would have been impolitic to refuse) it was possibly because it enabled him to pursue more easily the collecting of works of art, which was one of his two passions, the other being the restoration of the duchy of Norfolk. For Arundel was undoubtedly the greatest collector of his day, on a grandiose scale which the fortune of his wife, co-heiress of the wealthy earl of Shrewsbury, made possible. His collection of paintings and of classical statuary was so large that a gallery had to be built on Thames-side to contain it, and the inventory of his pictures, incomplete as it is, reads like the catalogue of a national gallery of today.[1]

Arundel was in Cologne at the beginning of May 1636, and in that city lived Hendrik van der Borcht, artist, connoisseur, and art dealer, whom Arundel had employed in some of his acquisitions. This Hendrik had a son of the same name, also an artist; and it may be that Hollar had already made his acquaintance. But by whatever means, though probably through the van der Borchts, Hollar was brought to the notice of the earl. 'His open, friendly face and his modest bearing must have made a favourable impression on the Earl of Arundel' says one of his biographers.[2] Arundel was a man who would require more than this before engaging someone in his service; and two qualifications Hollar had which could make his employment worthwhile to Arundel: he knew Prague, which Arundel was about to visit, and he could etch copies of the works of art in the Arundel Collection for a kind of pictorial catalogue which, according to Vertue, it was the earl's intention to produce.

> 'The Earl of Arundel had several gravers constantly at work with a design to make a large volume of prints of all his pictures, drawings and other rarities which Mr Evelyn had collected. All that were done

1 Printed by Sir Lionel Cust in the *Burlington Magazine*, XIX, 1911, but reprinted in a more useful form by M. F. S. Hervey in her *The life . . . of Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel*, Appendix V, Cambridge, 1921.

2 Springell, p. 142.

are now in the possession of his grandson, Sir John Evelyn.'[1]

'Several gravers' may be an exaggeration. There were certainly two: young van der Borcht and Hollar. That Arundel intended such a catalogue, we have only the statement of Vertue; but there is some corroboration in the fact that many of Hollar's etchings from this time have the phrase 'ex collectione Arundeliana' added to his signature. The etched catalogue was never produced. The Civil War would have interrupted any such scheme temporarily, and Arundel's death and the dispersal of the collection put an end to it permanently. In the portfolios and the chest of prints that have now happily been transferred to Christ Church, Oxford by the Evelyn family[2] and that presumably represent the diarist's print collection, nothing can be recognised as the beginning of such a catalogue.

The only reference that Arundel makes to Hollar is in a letter of 27 May 1636 from Nuremberg to his agent in Italy, William Petty:[3] 'I have one Hollarse wth me whoe drawes & eches printes in strong water quickely, and wth a pretty spiritte.'[4]

It was therefore in Arundel's entourage that Hollar made the return voyage to the Bohemia he had left in 1627. A diplomatic mission of such status as Arundel's was a very numerous body and travelled slowly, and Hollar had time to make many sketches on the road and on the river. Sprinzels lists 104, and there are many others in the JRL. sketch-book. He even had the opportunity to sketch on the return trip the same view he had made when going westward nine years before. The return to Prague also gave him the chance to make a careful drawing of the city which much later was to serve for the long view, P880, etched and published in Antwerp in 1649, which was, as he says, 'very exactly drawn from the Lorenzberg in 1636'.

It is noteworthy that Hollar profited from his connection with so important a person as Arundel, at the moment when he was received by the Emperor, to have his patent of nobility recognised or renewed, and to have his mother's family name added to it, so that Wenceslaus and his brothers Nicolas and Jan were now legally 'Prachenberger von Lövengrün und Bareyt'. Aubrey has a note on this distinction in the *Brief lives* (I, p. 407, Oxford, 1898):

> 'His father was a Knight of the Empire; which is by lettres patent under the imperiall seale (as our baronets). I have seen it: the seale is bigger than the broad seale of England: in the middle is the imperiall coate; and round about it are the coates of the Princes Electors.'

It is not necessary to trace in detail the journey to Prague and back, since a member of Arundel's suite wrote an account which was published in 1637 and has been reprinted in Springell's *Connoisseur and diplomat.* This is *A true relation of all the remarkable places . . . in the travels of . . . Thomas Howard, Earle of Arundell and Surrey . . . Ambassador Extraordinary to . . . Ferdinando, the second Emperour of Germanie . . . by William Crowne, Gentleman.* Crowne is an enigmatic character, who began as a retainer of Arundel, turned parliamentary soldier, emigrated to America, fathered John Crowne the playwright, and died in Boston *c.* 1683. His *True relation* is a pedestrian performance, produced perhaps to enhance Arundel's importance, but it gives an accurate picture of travel in a Europe devastated by the Thirty Years' War. It nowhere mentions Hollar. So many sketches exist of the places mentioned by Crowne that it is natural for us to regret, and justifiable to wonder, that the printed account was not illustrated by Crowne's colleague and fellow-traveller.

There were other, more interesting members of Arundel's suite: Dr Harvey, for example, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood.

> 'He was [says Aubrey] physitian, and a great favorite of the Lord High Marshall of England, Thomas Howard, earle of Arundel and Surrey, with whom he travelled as his physitian in his ambassade to the Emperor . . . at Vienna, Anno Domini 163– Mr W. Hollar (who was then one of his excellencie's gentlemen) told me that, in his voyage, he would still be making of excursions into the woods, makeing observations of strange trees, and plants, earths, etc., naturalls, and sometimes like to be lost, so that my Lord Ambassador would be really angry with him, for there was not only danger of thieves, but also of wild beasts.'

There was also Edward Walker, who went as secretary, who was later to be made Garter King of Arms, who subscribed for Hollar's great map of London that he was never to publish, and who paid for a plate of the abbey at Burton for the *Monasticon*, for which he wrote to Dugdale that he would employ 'my old freind Mr Hollart to doe it'. Arundel had even hoped to include Selden in the party; but he was of frail health, 'a most tender man', and refused.

His fruitless mission over, Arundel took ship at Helvetsluys on Christmas Day 1636 and reached Deal on 27 December. The next day he was in London. The rest of the ambassadorial party may have reached the capital in the next few days, and Hollar with them.

1 V. Note books. I, p. 47 (*Walpole Soc. Pubs*, XVIII, 1930).
2 Now most unhappily recalled and dispersed at auction because of onerous succession duties.
3 A Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, who seems to have been the first Englishman to make archaeological excavations in Greece.
4 Springell, p. 240.

HOLLAR IN ENGLAND, 1637–41

A more enviable situation could not be imagined for a young artist – an etcher who could never attain the economic independence of a fashionable painter – than membership of the household of such an art collector as Arundel. Even if he was not 'paid', he had his board and lodging assured. He was surrounded by the treasures of what was undoubtedly the finest private art collection of its day. He would have had access to such collections as that of the king, and of Nicolas Lanière, the court musician who had been partly responsible for assembling the royal art gallery. And it would almost certainly have been through Arundel's influence that he was appointed drawing master to one of the young princes. There is said to have once existed a volume of sketches by Hollar which served for the instruction of the young Prince Charles, if we may trust Vertue who refers to a drawing book 'from which king Charles the second learnt to draw when he was Prince of Wales . . . and Hollar taught him'.[1] And Vertue adds:

> 'On the cover is the impress of the feathers . . . there being eyes, nose, and mouth and several heads differently drawn. Some after Holbein. in this little book is a verse write by the Person who drew the figures. thus. I write to all brave learners that handles the pencil well and to the Curious Engraver who publickly doth excell. in possess. E of Oxford.'[2]

No doubt Vertue saw such a drawing book and it had the feathers of the prince of Wales; but whether it was by Hollar is less certain. It conflicts with the brief biography under Hollar's own etching of his portrait by Meyssens. As this is the most authoritative of all the statements concerning Hollar, it is worth quoting in full:

> 'Gentilhomme ne a Prage l'an 1607, a esté de nature fort inclin p^{r} l'art de meniature principalement pour esclaircir, mais beaucoup retardé par son pere, lan 1627, il est party de Prage aijant demeure en divers lieux en Allemaigne, il ç est addone pour peu de temps a esclaircir et aplicquer leau forte, estant party de Cologne avec le Comte d'Arondel vers Vienne et dillec par Prage vers lAngleterre, ou aijant esté serviteur domesticque du Duc de Iorck, il s'est retire de la a cause de la guerre a Anvers ou il reside encores.'

This is not, it is true, etched by Hollar, and it does not appear in the first state of the plate. But it is in the collection of portraits issued at Antwerp in 1649 when Hollar was still in that city, and it must be given some credence; in which case it was the duke of York he taught to draw and not the prince of Wales. But when he received this appointment it is impossible to say, no official document now remaining. It could not have been soon after his arrival in England, the duke being only three at the time. Charles, his brother, was six.

There is another connection with the royal family, although a remoter one, and belonging to the year 1638: a charming etching of Richmond Palace (P1058), interesting because no vestige of this palace now remains. In the foreground, landing from a barge, is a group which on closer inspection proves to be the king, the queen, the little princess Mary, and the two princes Charles and James. It could not have been purely a coincidence that Hollar found himself on the spot just at that moment, and the design is certainly not a composed one.

Of the state of engraving in England at the moment of Hollar's arrival it is not necessary to write, as it is dealt with in Hind's *Engraving in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Cambridge, 1952) and in M. Whinney and O. Millar's *English art, 1625–1714* (Oxford, 1957). Hollar's situation as a foreign immigrant was almost the normal one, as the number of foreign names among the artists working in England would show: Vorstermann (the first to practise etching, according to Vertue), Geminus, Franz and Remi Hogenberg, the two Gheeraerts (the elder of whom is now believed to have been the first etcher in England), Th. de Bry, J. Hondius, S. and W. van der Passe, Blooteling, G. Valck, and J. Clein, to mention only the lesser artists. The backward state of the arts in England made necessary the appeal to the continent, and Arundel in recruiting Hollar and young van der Borcht was merely following the royal example of calling on the more highly trained foreigner. There was, also, no Guild in London, as for example in Antwerp, to which the new arrival had to be bound before being allowed to practise his art; and in any case Hollar as an etcher had in the beginning no competitor to fear, and moreover was secure in the protection of the Earl Marshal, one of the most important official men in the kingdom.

In London, Hollar would almost certainly have been lodged in Arundel House, between the Strand and the river; and with him a little later was young Hendrik van der Borcht whom Arundel also brought over and who seems to have been what might be called a curator of the Arundel Collection. Hendrik was also occasionally employed as an assistant in the purchasing of works of art abroad, as some of Arundel's letters to Petty reveal.[1] The close and friendly relations between Hollar

1 Note books. I, pp. 49 and 69 (*Walpole Soc. Pubs*, XVIII, 1930).
2 In the note at p. 140 of the printed *Life*, Vertue is more cautious: 'I believe it was Prince Charles . . .'.

1 There is a long note in Springell at p. 100 suggesting that the young van der Borcht is possibly to be identified with the painter Henry van der Burgh, an identification argued by W. R. Valentiner in his *Pieter de Hooch* (1930), but which de Beer in a note on p. 29 of vol. II of his edition of Evelyn's

and the two van der Borchts, father and son, is shown by a letter on the back of a trial proof of Hollar's print of Solomon and the queen of Sheba, which turned up in the Brentano sale at Frankfort in May 1870. It is quoted by E. Dostál in his *Václav Hollar* (Prague, 1924), and is here given in a translation by Springell:[1]

> 'According to the special wish of your son I am forwarding you this proof, made in his presence. Do not think, please, that this is a perfect proof of the engraving. I have printed it on paper immediately after removing the acid. But in principle after the acid treatment, corrections on the plate must be done. In this case, however, they were omitted. I am therefore rather reluctant to send you the proof. I never send proofs away unless they are perfect. Here in this case you can only notice and see what the acid has done, but it hasn't been touched by the needle. Hendrick is gone for a rest in the country and asked me to send you his love. Your obedient servant, W. Hollar.'

Arundel House was a delightfully old-fashioned group of buildings, which had been the London residence of the bishops of Bath and had been bought by Arundel's great-grandfather in the mid sixteenth century. There was a large courtyard, entered through a covered passage from the Strand, round which were ranged the stables, quarters for servants, the hall, and a residence for the family, which extended on a lower level towards the river bank. To this heterogeneous collection of buildings of different styles and periods, Arundel had added a long narrow picture gallery running towards the river. We have three prints by Hollar of this town-house which may have been his London home: P1034 and P1035, which show the courtyard viewed from the south and from the north (the prints have the compass direction reversed); and P1011, which is a view eastward along Thames-side from the leads of the house. The house viewed from the river, with its gallery and its garden, can be clearly seen in the map of this area (P1002). P1035 is particularly interesting, since there is to be seen on the right what is obviously an artist's studio with its unusually large window for light. And leaning against the wall outside are what may well be large copper-plates.

The personality of Hollar's patron, Arundel, remains enigmatic in spite of all the knowledge we have of his official and even of his private life, so well presented by Miss Hervey in her *Life* (Cambridge, 1921). A biographer can be forgiven for presenting her subject in the most favourable light, and Miss Hervey does her best for Arundel. It may be the evidence is too one-sided to allow us to form a correct opinion of the man: Arundel was so much a public figure that most of the records concern this public man, and he lived in a time when dissimulation was prudent. But he does not seem to have been a likeable character. Even his love of art – or rather his amassing of pictures, statues, inscriptions, and bibelots (which is not necessarily the same thing) – seems rather an extension or intensification of his family pride or his self-centred personality. And equal with this passion for concentrating works of art in his own hands was his passion for regaining the dukedom of Norfolk, which he considered belonged to the Howards, and of which he felt himself unjustly deprived. But it had in fact been forfeited by two treasons; and the Crown probably felt that the Norfolks should be trimmed down to size.

With such a patron (if indeed Arundel was such a man) Hollar's relations would not have been close, and he would probably have been left in peace to do whatever work Arundel indicated and to develop whatever business relations he could outside Arundel House with print-sellers and publishers. This, at least, is what he did. After Arundel's death, Hollar would probably have received little help from the countess, whose aim was to ensure a living for herself from the piecemeal sale of objects from the Collection. The documents concerning the succession seem to show that there was some divergence of views between the countess and her son, Lord Stafford, who is even accused of having removed some of the treasures to a locked room when the inventory was being taken. Eventually, however, the countess' portion of the Collection passed to Stafford and was sold by his successors in 1720. Another and greater portion of the Collection passed to Arundel's grandson, the sixth duke of Norfolk, and was later dispersed in part by his son, the seventh duke.

Again, of Hollar's personal life at this time we have almost no information. The Arundel archives, which are by no means complete, are silent as to Hollar. It is Aubrey who gives us our only piece of news:

> 'At Arundel-house he maried with my ladie's wayting woman, Mrs . . . Tracey, by whom he haz a daughter, that was one of the greatest beauties I have seen; his son by her dyed in the plague, an ingeniose youth, drew delicately.'

Aubrey gives no date for the marriage; but in MS. Ashmole 3 in the Bodleian is an astrological note: 'James Holler filius Wenceslai[?] Holler nat 5 8 April hor[?] 2 mane anno 1643 apud Tart Hall' (not 'Larkhall' as Springell prints it). Ashmole adds that the marriage

Diary does not consider convincing. Van der Borcht was a painter: Evelyn commissioned him to do his portrait. But what has become of his paintings? Have they become confused with those of Ter Borsch; or did he, like Hazlitt, not persevere in this art?

1 Springell, note 110, p. 160.

had taken place on 4 July 1641. Tart Hall was another London residence of the Arundel family, situated near where Buckingham Palace now is. As for Mistress Tracy we can only surmise, as Miss Hervey does, that she may have been a relation of the Anthony Tracy who appears in Arundel's correspondence as one of his agents for the purchase of works of art in Italy. Anthony had a sister, but she had married Sir Horace Vere, a distinguished soldier, of a family related to the Howards. Mistress Tracy's Christian name must have been Margaret, for the entry in the burial register of St Giles in the Fields for 10 March 1653, according to the Rector, the Rev. G. C. Taylor, reads: 'Margaret wife of Wenceslaus Holler'.

The question of religion at Arundel House has some pertinence in the matter of Hollar's marriage, for it makes it almost certain that his wife was a Catholic. It was a Catholic household, or, more correctly, Catholic on the female side, and Church of England on the male. Aletheia, countess of Arundel, had been educated in the Catholic faith, and so remained; but with the earl it was different. His grandfather had been involved in a Catholic conspiracy and executed for high treason. His father had abandoned dissipation for Catholicism, which he embraced with an equal recklessness. His attempt to leave the country secretly – and so join the queen's enemies – naturally resulted in his imprisonment in the Tower, where he died. Arundel was sensible enough to avoid the errors of his forefathers that had resulted in the loss of the dukedom of Norfolk and of much of the Howard property. The stability of the State had been achieved by the Tudors, partly by creating a national church as part of the State system; and adherence to another, foreign, church was now synonymous with opposition to the State. Arundel, therefore, at the age of thirty, publicly manifested his conformity with the Church of England and had his sons brought up as Protestants. But his wife did not associate herself with this declaration of policy, and it is to be presumed that she remained a Catholic and that her personal servants, such as Mistress Tracy, would have been of the same faith.

This view of the religious constitution of the Arundel household is probably correct. That Arundel's public conformity was genuine seems to be proved by a letter from his mother, Catholic herself, quoted by Tierney in his *History and antiquities of . . . Arundel* (1834), which begs Arundel to think seriously upon his spiritual state and to consider

> 'how little you have gained either of honour, wealth, reputation or true contentment of mind by the course which . . . you have followed contrary to ye breeding and education I gave you & to ye worthy example yr blessed father left you'.

In a note on p. 429 of that *History*, Tierney says:

> 'Of the religion in which he brought up his sons I have discovered no decisive evidence: but several of his grandsons are known to have been entrusted to his care; and it is not an inapt illustration of his real sentiments that they were educated catholics.'

There is however decisive evidence of one of his sons' Protestant orthodoxy, for Mowbray put his signature to the Parliamentary protestation of May 1641 against 'popish innovations'. As for Tierney's statement about the grandsons, it conflicts with what Evelyn reports of his visit to Arundel at Padua in April 1646 a little before Arundel's death:

> 'I left that greate & excellent Man in teares upon some private discourse of the crosses had befaln his Illustrious family: particularly the undutifullnesse of his Grandson Philips turning Dominican Frier . . . the unkindnesse of his Countesse, now in Holland.'

If Evelyn is to be believed (and he is) Tierney's statements are misleading. Is it because Evelyn's evidence is so contrary to his own that Tierney refers so disparagingly to the diarist?

On this question of religion Clarendon is a witness to be taken seriously, although it must be remembered that he disliked Arundel. He lived, he says, in a state of utter indifference to all religion and 'died in the same doubtful character in which he lived'.

Hollar naturally would not have been aware of the real political situation in the country in which he had arrived in 1637. After the Europe of the Thirty Years' War, it would have seemed a peaceful place; for England was enjoying the end of a tranquillity that was the legacy of the firm Tudor Government. Unfortunately, Elizabeth's virginity had added a codicil to that legacy in the person of James. But unlikeable as he may have been as a man, he had enough cunning, or good sense, not to jeopardize the rich heritage that had come to him; and he produced a son, Henry, whom his contemporaries regarded as a most hopeful prince. Henry's premature death in 1612 left his younger brother Charles heir to the throne, and from that flowed fatally all the political and religious strife of thirty-five years and all the carnage of a civil war.

By 1637 when Hollar arrived, the defects of Charles' character – his self-conceit, his obstinacy, his lack of common sense, above all his feebleness of will that left him vulnerable to such stronger-minded persons as his wife – these defects of character had already engaged him on that downward path that led to the inevitable execution in 1649.